

VZCZCXYZ0001
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHVL #0327 1270609
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 060609Z MAY 08
FM AMEMBASSY VILNIUS
TO RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS BE
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2257
INFO RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 3717

UNCLAS VILNIUS 000327

SIPDIS

COMMERCE FOR ITA:LMARKOWITZ;
WARSAW FOR FAS:EWENBERG AND KSNIPES;
WARSAW FOR FCS:DMCNEIL

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [LH](#)
SUBJECT: HIGHER FOOD PRICES HAVE NO EFFECT ON LITHUANIAN
RESISTANCE TO BIO-TECH

REF: VILNIUS 283

¶1. Neither the Director of the Economics Department of the Bank of Lithuania, Raimondas Kuodis, nor the PM's Advisor on Agricultural Issues, Mindaugas Bastys or the Head of the Ministry of Environment's Genetically Modified Organisms Division, Danius Lygis, feel that recent price rises in food and agricultural commodities have encouraged the GOL to reconsider its resistance to the introduction of bio-tech crops. All expressed concern for the use and consumption of such products in Lithuania. Lygis mentioned a May 8 Steering Committee meeting at the Ministry of Environment to discuss worldwide food price increases, where, perhaps, bio-tech might be discussed. He added that after the October 2008 parliamentary elections, Lithuania's resistance to field trials of bio-tech crops might change.

¶2. Laimonas Ciakas, Director of the Ministry of Agriculture's EU Affairs and International Relations Department, reiterated arguments against bio-tech we have heard before: Lithuania is a small country where buffer zones would be difficult to establish and multiple generations' worth of testing needs to be completed before bio-tech products are deemed safe. Ciakas mentioned, however, that with transport fuel price increases and EU goals on bio-fuel use included in the 2020 plan, Lithuania might look towards a future of importing bio-tech commodities to produce bio-fuel. Also, Ciakas mentioned that products not for human consumption made from bio-tech, such as plastics or textiles, could be considered in the future for sale in Lithuania.

¶3. We spoke with a representative of a local firm that produces bio-fuel. He said that none of the Lithuanian bio-fuel producers import their inputs from abroad. Hence, all are using conventional or organic crops in their production.
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